

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 01066 071948Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OPR-01 SS-14 PER-01 FS-01 OC-01
CCO-00 MED-01 SSO-00 A-01 ICAE-00 ABF-01 INR-05
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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6521
AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBSSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

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LIMDIS

JOINT STATE/AID/ICA FOR ARA/MGT DIRECTOR WM. CALDERHEAD,

CARACAS FOR RSO FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOCI,ENRG, ABUD, AFSP, ASEC, APER
SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION FOR SAFEHAVEN OF DEPENDENTS

REF: GEORGETOWN 1058

1. AS POWER CRISIS CONTINUES, I AM CONSIDERING CAREFULLY THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF LOSS OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES REPORTED REFTEL ON OUR SMALL MISSION STAFF, AND PARTICULARLY ON DEPENDENTS. THOUGH EVERYONE IS BEARING UP SURPRISINGLY WELL, I WISH TO EMPHASIZE THAT GEORGETOWN'S THIN RESOURCES HAVE DWINDLED ALARMINGLY IN FEW DAYS SINCE BREAKDOWN BEGAN. WE NOW UNDERSTAND THAT CRISIS MAY EXTEND AT LEAST 6 TO 8 RPT 6 TO 8 MORE WEEKS.

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PAGE 02 GEORGE 01066 071948Z

2. SECURING POTABLE WATER, CANDLES OR LAMPS FOR WHICH FUEL MAY BE AVAILABLE, AND FINDING AND COOKING FOOD WHEN POWWER IS MADE AVAILABLE LOOM AS MAJOR PROBLEMS. MOST EMPLOYEES HAVE ELECTRIC STOVES. LITTLE OR NO WATER HAS BEEN SUPPLIED TO CITY HOUSES FOR LAST SIX DAYS. HIGH SALINE CONTENT AND IN SOME AREAS THE PRESENCE

OF LIVE WORMS IN WATER DETERS DRINKING. THE DETERIORATION OF WATER SUPPLY IS SERIOUS ENOUGH TO RAISE SPECTRE OF HEALTH PROBLEMS SOON. UNFORTUNATELY, PURE BOTTLED DRINKING WATER IS NOT AVAILABLE IN GEORGETOWN. EMBASSY IS CURRENTLY SUPPLYING CASES OF BOTTLED CLUB SODA AS ONLY VIABLE DRINKING SOURCE.

3. AVAILABILITY OF FOOD, NEVER PLENTIFUL, IS DECLINING. A NUMBER OF MARKETS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO CLOSE, AND ONLY TWO ACCEPTABLE RESTAURANTS (EACH ATTACHED TO A HOTEL) ARE STILL FUNCTIONING. NO FLOUR IS BEING MILLED BECAUSE OF LACK OF POWER AND ALL BREAD IS RAPIDLY SELLING OUT. COOKING GAS IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE AND KEROSENE, ANOTHER COOKING SOURCE, IS BECOMING DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN.

4. ASSUMING THAT LIVING CONDITIONS CONTINUE TO DETERIORATE, I BELIEVE WE MUST GIVE THOUGHT TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT AT SOME STAGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE IT MAY BE PRUDENT TO SEND OUR DEPENDENTS WIVES AND CHILDREN TO SAFEHAVEN AT A NEARBY POST UNTIL THE SITUATION STABILIZES. TOTAL NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS IS 17 (8 WIVES, 9 CHILDREN). IF NECESSARY AND THE SITUATION WARRANTS, WE MAY AT A LATER DATE BE OBLIGED TO REDUCE THE STAFF TO AN ESSENTIAL MINIMUM.

5. I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE ABOVE AND STANDBY AUTHORITY FROM THE DEPARTMENT TO MOVE THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 GEORGE 01066 071948Z

DEPENDENTS IF IT PROVES NECESSARY.

6. THIS, THEN, IS ONLY A "GET READY" MESSAGE TO PERMIT US TO COPE WITH A CONTINGENCY THAT MAY NOT ARISE. I WOULD BE DERELICT, HOWEVER, IN NOT RAISING THE POSSIBILITY. GEORGETOWN'S ECONOMY IS SO WEAK THAT IT COULD UNRAVEL VERY QUICKLY UNDER THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES. BURKE

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Message Attributes

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